

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

● **What is MASAS?**

The Multi-Agency Situational Awareness System (MASAS) is the only proven and scalable Canada-wide online public safety situational awareness system in the country, designed for improved emergency communication and situational awareness at all levels of public safety.

● **Who Operates MASAS?**

MASAS is operated and overseen by CanOps (Canadian Public Safety Operations Organization), a national not-for-profit dedicated to public safety formed and led by key public safety stakeholders.

● **Why was MASAS created?**

MASAS was created in response to the growing need for accurate, verified, real time data from multiple sources, leading to more complete and accurate situational awareness for both immediate and ongoing incidents or events concerning public safety.

● **How long has MASAS been in operation?**

Since the launch of the pilot project in 2011, more than 600 public safety operating units from more than 500 organizations from all levels of government and across all public safety sub-sectors have connected through MASAS in a successful multi-year pilot project, led by Defense Research Development Canada (DRDC). The pilot ended officially in early 2017, and MASAS is now moving into a full featured and sustainable business model under CanOps.

● **Who can or should use MASAS?**

Users include public safety professionals at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government and anyone in the community safety sector i.e. Emergency Management, Fire, Policing, Health (including EMS), critical Infrastructure operators and non-Governmental Organizations. The system is valuable for incidents, occurrences, exercises, and training both large and small, making it useful for local, regional, provincial and federal bodies.

● **Why should we use MASAS?**

As a national online tool that works to publish real-time information, MASAS allows for a more targeted and effective responses to incidents and events of all sizes, thus improving the safety of responders and the public reducing the workload and costs associated with mitigation, prevention, response and recovery by having centralized, reliable data, provided by public safety professionals.

● **Why should we subscribe to MASAS under CanOps?**

CanOps was created as a national not-for-profit organization that provides a trusted framework of operational supports and related governance to advance and deliver highly relevant national public safety programs, products and services. The MASAS subscription model ensures sustainability and continuing development of the system, while also ensuring optimal value and economy to all public safety organizations. In addition the MASAS subscription model builds a public safety community of practice, connecting and engaging professionals across the country.

● How does MASAS work?

MASAS is fully inter-operable with commercial and custom public safety applications, bridging the gap between multiple information sources, including: Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Computer Aided Dispatch systems (CAD), forest fire management systems and exchange, emergency vehicle routing systems, collaboration software and more. An easy to use web application ensures all public safety organizations can benefit from MASAS using both desktop and mobile browsers.

● What Information is Shared?

During the pilot project it was determined that the scope of MASAS would be limited to non-sensitive information. This means that although the system is not available to the public, it also does not reside behind high security protocols as the majority of MASAS users would not have the clearance required to access such information. In those cases where there may be sensitive information available, notifications are added to MASAS to let users know it exists, along with instructions on how to access that for those with the right credentials.

● What are the technical and training requirements?

MASAS offers a built-in set of tools within its online environment, which means that users do not need to worry about complicated coding or having their own tools. The information in MASAS can easily be transferred to other systems using the xml data readily available, and the online availability and design provides a mobile friendly solution making it fully transportable for front line operators. The source code can be made available to developers if desired. Under CanOps, MASAS is able to provide technical assistance where necessary as well as training and education on how to use and interact with the system to its subscribers. As well, the developer's "sandbox" is available to allow vendors the opportunity to test for interoperability before deploying live solutions with their clients.

● How do I subscribe to MASAS?

To find out more or to become a subscriber of MASAS please contact:

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"Exercise Domino was a full scale exercise examining issues related to security, emergency management and business continuity that would impact a spectrum of organizations across the private sector to all three levels of government. As part of the exercise several private companies were invited to be participants in the exercise, along with the usual municipal and safety sector partners. As a result, over 43 private emergency operations centers were opened during the exercise. Because the information that appeared on MASAS was "trusted", groups were able to move much more quickly in responding to new information as it came to light. The MASAS tool was identified by many groups as having been very effective in managing information flow. Municipal and provincial emergency management organizations should actively promote the use of this tool to proactive CI partners in both the private and public sector."

Murray Sanders
Manager of the Saskatchewan Critical Infrastructure Assurance Program